

**State Board of Social Services
Poverty Committee Meeting
Montgomery Government Center
Christiansburg, VA**

August 20, 2008

Attendees

Trudy Brisendine
Maggi Luca
Jim Schuyler
Commissioner Conyers
Margaret Schultze
Marianne McGhee
Susan Clark
Paul McWhinney
Terry Smusz
Ann Hess

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Co-chair Maggi Luca. Peppy Linden will also serve as a Co-chair.

Minutes

ON MOTION DULY MADE (Mr. Schuyler) and seconded (Ms. Brisendine) moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Motion carried with all in favor.

Ms. Luca commented that the disc on transportation podcast handed out at the last meeting was excellent.

Marianne McGhee provided information on “Be alright when money’s tight” public awareness proposal. She also discussed with staff of Virginia.gov about their website portal and they are very interested in hosting this public information campaign.

This will likely include easy-to-use easy-to-read information on state taxes, community college applications and eligibility, mental health, state parks as well as social services. Members of the Poverty committee were enthusiastically in support of moving ahead with this initiative. Ms. McGhee will follow up with Virginia.gov website staff.

Mr. Schuyler stated that a one-page checklist focusing on this issue could be placed in libraries and other sites people visit.

Ms. McGhee will check to see if the Governor’s Office will do a press release. She will do a push to our media people. Launch time should be about 6-8 weeks.

Margaret Schultze reported on a new competitive grant from the National Governor Association which will be awarded to 10 states to provide poverty summits next year. Virginia is planning to apply for this funding and support – a \$12,000 grant and technical assistance from Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Lynette Isbell will prepare the grant application which is due by September 5 and awarded by September 30. It was asked that she review the language used by the Casey Foundation in the grant writing.

Commissioner Conyers talked about the fact that more and more people are working but poverty is increasing.

Mr. Schuyler stated that if the federal poverty levels were raised, more money would be provided.

Ms. Brisendine shared her concern that 123,996 people were eligible for the federal economic stimulus but had not applied. The deadline to apply is October 15, 2008. Ms. McGhee advised she could write a PSA, do flyers, Broadcast, etc., but couldn't guarantee they would be picked up by media.

Mr. Schuyler advised the Virginia News Connection had already done a spot on this.

There will be a Common Sense Conference in Bethesda Maryland on September 4-5, 2008.

Nest Steps

Work with staff on the Va portal initiative now and perhaps have a bookmark or other useful tool to use after partners have been identified.

With no further business to discuss, the committee adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Rengnerth